2011 CONSUMER CONFIDENCE REPORT ❖ CITY OF RIO RANCHO

RioRancho
City of Vision

City of Rio Rancho
Water Conservation Office
Conserve Today Preserve Tomorrow

From the Mayor of Rio Rancho, About Your Consumer Confidence Report

In 1996, Congress amended the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) to add a provision requiring all community water systems to deliver a brief water quality report to their customers annually. This Consumer Confidence Report summarizes the information that Rio Rancho Water and Wastewater collects to comply with safe drinking water regulations. For questions about Rio Rancho's water testing, call **896-8813**.

Please take time to read this important report about the quality of Rio Rancho's drinking water provided in 2011. The city delivers this report each year to help citizens learn more about the city's role in supplying and maintaining safe and healthy drinking water supplies.

As mayor, I encourage everyone to be informed and active participants in the water management initiatives that shape our water future. Together we can Conserve Today – Preserve Tomorrow.

Mayor Thomas E. Swisstack

Your Voice Counts

The Utilities Commission is a group of volunteers appointed by the mayor and governing body; one person per city district plus an at-large position. The Utilities Commission guides the city Utilities Division with input and policy decision-making that impacts the entire city. The Utilities Commission meets on the third Tuesday of every month at 6:00 pm at city hall, 3200 Civic Center Circle NE. These are open meetings, so come and voice any of your water or wastewater concerns. For more information on the Utilities Commission please call **896-8715** or go to **www.ci.rio-rancho.nm.us.**

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Note: *all text preceded by a " ■ " is information required by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.*

Commissioners, left to right, standing: Michael Gibson (District 1); Bill White (District 2); Robert Bajek (District 5); James Cleveland (Vice-Chairman, District 6) and Michael Walker (At-Large). Seated is Anthony Anastasi (Chairman, District 4); Missing from photo is Don Hensley (District 3).

Why Conserve Water? Why indeed!

Rio Rancho's drinking water comes entirely from the Santa Fe Group Aquifer. This underground water source is not limitless, so conservation of this natural resource is a must.

- **Sources of drinking water (both tap and bottled water) include rivers, lakes, streams, ponds, reservoirs, springs, and wells. As water travels over the surface of the land and through the ground, it dissolves and absorbs naturally occurring minerals and, in some cases, radioactive material.**

- **Water can also pick up substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activity.**

- **To ensure tap water is safe to drink, the EPA prescribes regulations which limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulates bottled water, which must provide the same protection of public health.**

Conserving water and using it wisely makes sense not only from an ecological point of view, but an economical one as well: the cost of producing tap water that is safe for you to drink and meets the EPA requirements, is costly. Conserving water protects a finite water supply, and it also reduces expense.

Your Drinking Water

The aquifer in this area lies within volcanic rocks and these rocks contain naturally occurring arsenic. As water infiltrates through the rock type, it dissolves some of the arsenic from the rocks. Since 2006, the city of Rio Rancho has invested more than $46 million in building and equipping arsenic removal facilities. The price for the chemicals to remove the arsenic is $2.5 million annually, and rising.

■ While your drinking water meets EPA's standard for arsenic, it does contain low levels of arsenic. EPA's standard balances the current understanding of arsenic's possible health effects against the cost of removing arsenic from drinking water. EPA continues to research the health effects of low levels of arsenic, which is a mineral known to cause cancer in humans at high concentrations and is linked to other health effects such as skin damage and circulatory problems.

Most of the infrastructure of a water and wastewater company seems to be invisible because it is underground. Did you know that the city has about 400 miles of water mains running throughout the city to provide quality drinking water to the residents and businesses?

Some of the recent infrastructure improvements that you may never see are:

- Well 12 Reverse Osmosis (RO) system to reduce total dissolved solids – paid with $2 million ARRA (American Recovery and Reinvestment Act) money
- Aquifer Storage Demonstration project – paid with $6 million by NM Water Trust Board Grant, Sandoval County and the State of New Mexico
- Service Line replacement on Apache Loop – at a cost of $785,000, paid by Rio Rancho utility customers through rates
- Barrancas Arroyo Sewer Line – paid with $3 million by Environmental Gross Receipts Tax

Susceptibility Analysis

The Susceptibility Analysis of the Rio Rancho water utility reveals that the utility is well maintained and operated, and the sources of drinking water are generally protected from potential sources of contamination. The susceptibility rank of the entire water system is MODERATELY LOW, a good rating. Call New Mexico Environment Department at 1-877-654-8720 for questions.

Lead

■ If present, elevated levels of lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and components associated with service lines and home plumbing. The Rio Rancho Utilities Division is responsible for providing high quality drinking water, but cannot control the variety of materials used in plumbing components. When your water has been sitting for several hours, you can minimize the potential for lead exposure by flushing your tap for 30 seconds to 2 minutes before using water for drinking or cooking. If you are concerned about lead in your drinking water, you may wish to have your water tested. Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline or at www.epa.gov/safewater/lead.

City Sustainability Efforts

Sustainability of the groundwater supply is one of the many goals of the city. Because of this mission, the Water Conservation Office was formed to educate citizens and businesses about our precious water resource and to enforce the ordinance mandates as needed. Most of our citizens understand that we live in a desert with limited water resources.

As part of the sustainability effort, the city's Water and Wastewater Utilities has been replacing the older water meters throughout the city with new Automatic Meter Read (AMR) meters. As water meters age, they slow down and under-register how much water a home or business uses.

The new AMR meters have several benefits:

- The reading is more accurate
- The meter readers no longer manually read each meter; instead, the meters use radio frequency
- Reduced miss-read errors
- Reduced gasoline and personnel needed to perform the reading task
- The meter gives a "profile" of water use

To date, about 54 percent of the meters have been replaced.

These new AMR meters have an excellent water conservation feature that assists customers by helping to keep their water bills lower. When the AMR meter registers water flowing through it for a 24-hour period of time, the meter sends a "leak" report along with the monthly meter read. From this report, the customer is notified that there may be something leaking within the water system in the yard or the house. In many instances, this leak manifests itself as a troubled toilet whose flapper or fill tube has worn out. Many customers don't realize the toilet may be leaking because there is not a puddle of water under or near it. The toilet leaks from the tank into the bowl and then into the sewer; they can waste 50 gallons of water or more per day. If you need help locating a leak, contact the Water Conservation Office at **896-8715**.

People With Sensitivities

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Please seek advice from your health care provider if you are:

- **Immuno-compromised**
- **Undergoing chemotherapy**
- **A transplant recipient**
- **Living with HIV/AIDS or other immune system disorders**
- **Elderly or have a newborn that may be at risk from infections**

The EPA Center for Disease Control guidelines on appropriate ways to lessen the risk of infection by Cryptosporidium and other microbial contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791.

DETECTED CONTAMINANTS

MICROBIOLOGICAL CONTAMINANTS

Substance	MCL	MCLG	Highest Monthly Percentage/ Number Our Water	Sample Date	Violation	Typical Source of Contamination
Total Coliform Bacteria	5% of monthly samples are positive	0	ND	2011	No	Naturally present in the environment

RADIOACTIVE CONTAMINANTS

Substance	MCL	MCLG	Our Water	Range of Detection	Sample Date	Violation	Typical Source of Contamination
Alpha emitters (pCi/L)	15	0	6.9	0.1 – 6.9	2011	No	Erosion of natural deposits
Beta/photon emitters (pCi/L)	50	0	10.3	2.5 – 10.3	2011	No	Decay of natural and man-made deposits
Radium Combined 226/228 (pCi/L)	5	0	0.46	0.04 – 0.46	2011	No	Erosion of natural deposits
Uranium (ppb)	30	0	7	1 – 7	2011	No	Erosion of natural deposits

DISINFECTANTS AND DISINFECTION BY-PRODUCTS

(There is convincing evidence that addition of disinfectant is necessary for control of microbial contaminants)

Substance	MCL or MRDL	MCLG or MRDLG	Our Water Annual Average	Range of Detection (Low - High)	Sample Date	Violation	Typical Source of Contamination
TTHMs [Total trihalomethanes] (ppb) (Stage 1 Rule)	80	N/A	14.3	1.4 – 14.3	2011	No	By-product of drinking water disinfection
HAA5 [Five Haloacetic Acids] (ppb) (Stage 1 Rule)	60	N/A	2.9	0.09 – 2.9	2011	No	By-product of drinking water chlorination
Chlorine (ppm)	4	4	0.58	0.3 – 0.8	2011	No	Water additive used to control microbes

Definitions

AL: Action Level – The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements that a water system must follow.

Drinking Water: Including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. The presence of contaminants does not necessarily indicate that water poses a health risk.

MCL: Maximum Contaminant Level – the highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. MCLs are set as close to the MCLGs as feasible using the best available treatment technology.

MCLG: Maximum Contaminant Level Goal – The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLGs allow for a margin of safety.

Microbial Contaminants: Viruses and bacteria which may come from sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations, and wildlife.

MRDL: Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level- The highest level of a disinfectant allowed in drinking water. There is convincing evidence that addition of a disinfectant is necessary for control of microbial contaminants.

MRDLG: Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goal – The level of a drinking water disinfectant below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MRDLGs do not reflect the benefits of the use of disinfectants to control microbial contaminants.

N/A: Not applicable.

ND: Not detected.

pCi/L: Picocuries per liter – a measure of radioactivity.

ppb: Parts per billion or micrograms per liter – approximately equal to 1 drop of water in a 22,000 gallon swimming pool.

ppm: Parts per million or milligrams per liter – approximately equal to 1 drop of water in 22 gallons.

Range of detection: Highest & lowest levels of substance found in treated drinking water.

DETECTED CONTAMINANTS

INORGANIC CONTAMINANTS

Substance	MCL	MCLG	Our Water	Range of Detection	Sample Date	Violation	Typical Source of Contamination
Arsenic (ppb)	10	0	8	1 - 8	2011	No	Erosion of natural deposits
Chromium (ppb)	100	100	10	1-10	2011	No	Discharge from steel and pulp mills; erosion of natural deposits
Fluoride (ppm)	4	4	1.17	0.43 - 1.17	2011	No	Erosion of natural deposits; discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories
Nitrate [measured as Nitrogen] (ppm)	10	10	2.7	0.17 - 2.7	2011	No	Runoff from fertilizer use; leaching from septic tanks, sewage; erosion of natural deposits

NON-REGULATED ORGANIC CONTAMINANTS

Substance	State MCL	MCLG	Our Water	Range of Detection	Sample Date	Violation	Typical Source of Contamination
2-Butanone (MEK) (ppb)	N/A	N/A	2.8	ND - 2.8	2011	No	Discharge from solvents used for coatings, resins, and adhesives
Tetrahydrofuran (ppb)	N/A	N/A	0.8	ND - 0.8	2011	No	Discharge from manufacturing of protective coatings, adhesives, magnetic strips, and printing inks

HOUSEHOLD INORGANIC CONTAMINANTS

Copper and Lead	Action Level	MCLG	Our Water	Number of Sites Exceeding AL	Sample Date	Violation	Typical Source of Contamination
Copper (ppm)	1.3	1.3	0.32 90th percentile	0	2011	No	Corrosion of household plumbing systems
Lead (ppb)	15	0	5 90th percentile	2	2011	No	Corrosion of household plumbing systems

Contaminants that may be present in source water include:

Inorganic Contaminants: Salts and metals which can be naturally-occurring or result from urban storm water runoff, industrial or domestic wastewater discharges, oil and gas production, mining, or farming.

Organic Chemical Contaminants: Synthetic and volatile organic chemicals, which are by-products of industrial processes and petroleum production, and can also come from gas stations, urban storm water runoff, and septic systems.

Pesticides and Herbicides: May come from a variety of sources such as agriculture, storm water runoff, and residential uses.

Radioactive Contaminants: Which can be naturally occurring, or the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.

Environmental Protection Agency
Safe Drinking Water Hotline:
1-800-426-4791

Rio Rancho
Water Production Manager:
896-8813

Making Our Efforts Go Further

The City of Rio Rancho looks for and applies for many federal and state grants to extend our budget and maximize the efficient use of our water supply. These additional funds assist us in building needed infrastructure and educational activities, including:

- Our aquifer storage and recovery project, with New Mexico Water Trust Board and State of New Mexico monies
- The Children's Water Festival for fourth-grade students, with a grant from the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
- The reverse osmosis system to treat water at Well 12, with ARRA funds

Our Water Future

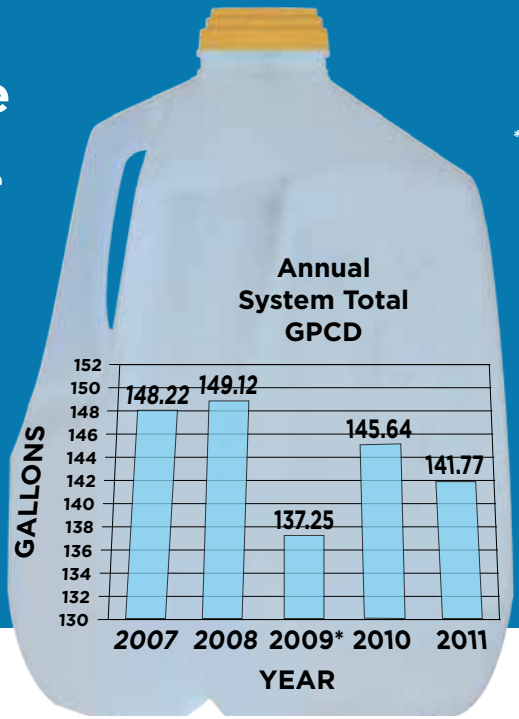
The earlier in life a person learns to conserve water, the more likely it is to become a lifelong habit – and the more water saved for the future. The city of Rio Rancho's Water Conservation Office hosts an annual Rio Rancho Children's Water Festival. Approximately 600 fourth-grade students have fun with interactive activities designed to get them interested in and educated on water-related issues such as:

- Watersheds
- Water quality
- Water conservation
- Wastewater

Meeting the Challenge

Congratulations Rio Rancho – Residents and Businesses Continue their Conservation Efforts!

According to our calculations of how much water each resident used last year – Gallons Per Capita (person) Per Day, or GPCD, our community continues to "Conserve Today – Preserve Tomorrow." GPCD was only 141.77 in 2011 – a 2.6 percent reduction compared to water use in 2010. Keep up the good work!



** We believe a combination of above-average precipitation and a high vacancy rate due to the economy brought our water use numbers down substantially in 2009.*

Rio Rancho's Water Conservation Ordinance

The water conservation ordinance was enacted to assist with the city's sustainability measures. The rules in the ordinance apply to all residents and businesses within the city no matter whether you are a water system customer or have a private domestic well. Rules of the ordinance include:

Time-of-Day restrictions – No watering with automatic or manual sprinklers during the day between 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., from April 1 to September 30 each year. Hand watering and drip irrigation are exempt from this time-of-day restriction.

If you have newly planted sod/seed or landscape, you can request a variance from the time-of-day restrictions for up to 30 days. Call **896-8715** or e-mail **mwrage@ci.rio-rancho.nm.us** for information on how to apply for a variance.

Washing vehicles – Must have a positive shut-off nozzle for the hose to reduce waste of water.

Hospitality businesses – Restaurants must abide by the 'Water by Request' rules where customers are not served water unless the customer requests a glass of water.

Rio Rancho's Landscape Ordinance Promotes Water Conservation

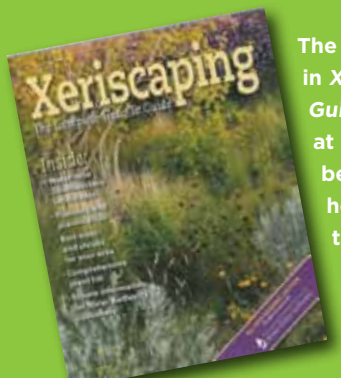
The landscape ordinance was recently updated to include water conservation measures. The installation of cool season turf grass in residential front yards is prohibited. Cool season turf grass is permitted in side and rear yards but shall not exceed 1,000 square feet or 20 percent of the total lot area, whichever is less. Cool season turf grass can take from 40 inches to 60 inches of water per year to grow and stay green while Rio Rancho only gets about eight inches of precipitation each year. This uses a lot of precious water on grass.

Cool season turf grasses include, but are not limited to, the following species:

- Poa pratensis (Kentucky Bluegrass)
- Festuca spp. (Fescues), and
- Lolium spp. (Ryegrasses).

Plant materials in front yards shall be limited to species that are not listed as high water use on the city of Rio Rancho plant list. Existing turf and other plants installed prior to October 31, 2011, are exempt from this regulation. After October 31, 2011, future homeowner association bylaws or new restrictive covenants shall not have requirements that conflict with the landscape restrictions.

The revisions to Ordinance 154 can be found on the city web site in the Municipal Code tab on the left of the home page. The city's website is **www.ci.rio-rancho.nm.us** or you can call **891-5006** for more information.



The city of Rio Rancho plant list is found in *Xeriscaping: The Complete How-To Guide*. The complete guide can be found at city hall or the restricted plant list can be found on the city web site. From the home page, select the "Departments" tab on the left and go to the Development Services page.

"Pipe of the Future" Fails Test of Time

Polybutylene is a form of plastic resin that was used extensively in the manufacture of water supply piping from 1978 until 1995. Due to the low cost of the material and ease of installation, "poly" pipes were viewed as "the pipe of the future" and were used as a substitute for copper piping. Poly piping was used extensively in Rio Rancho.

Many believe that oxidants in public water supplies, such as chlorine, react with the polybutylene piping and acetyl fittings causing them to scale, flake and become brittle, which weakens the pipes and causes leaks.

Just as poly pipes are causing problems in residential homes, the city's polyvinyl-chloride (PVC) water-main pipes are also failing at rapid rates. The number of service-line (street) leaks is close to 1,000 from July 2011 to the present. As these annoying street leaks

(located between the customer's meter and the water main) are reported, they are investigated and ranked as to how much water they are leaking. The worst leaks are repaired first. By law, city water crews must allow 48 hours before repairs can begin so line spotters can locate and mark underground cables, and electric and gas lines. This is necessary to prevent damages and keep everyone safe. Leaking service lines, unlike water-main breaks, do not prevent water from reaching customers' homes.

A 2009 study found that the cost to replace all the old water lines would be more than 35 million dollars. Please call in the leaks as soon as possible! The faster they are on the list; the faster they are repaired.

Report Leaks as Soon as Possible

891-5020
8 am to 5 pm Weekdays
975-1581
After Hours or Emergency

City of Rio Rancho
Utilities Division
3200 Civic Center Circle NE
Rio Rancho, NM 87144

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Permit No. 1104

IMPORTANT INFO

Administration 896-8715

Utilities Billing 891-5020

Report Leaks 891-5020

**Emergency/
Leaks After Hours 975-1581**

Line Spots, NM One Call 811

Water Conservation 896-8715

Engineering 891-5016

**Environmental
Programs 896-8737**

Water Waste Hotline 896-8299

www.ci.rio-rancho.nm.us

Postal Customer
Rio Rancho, New Mexico

Este informe contiene información importante acerca de su agua potable. Haga que alguien lo traduzca para usted, o hable con alguien que lo entienda.

RioRancho City of Vision

City of Rio Rancho Utilities Division

City of Rio Rancho Water Conservation Office
Conserve Today. Preserve Tomorrow.

City of Rio Rancho Environmental Programs